



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A SECOND-YEAR PROBLEM

The difficulty which confronts the teacher of Spanish at the beginning of the second year is a serious one. During the summer vacation, the student has forgotten much of his Spanish, and as a consequence his first attempts to use the language in the fall are more or less discouraging. He is by no means as interested as the first-year student who has the tremendous incentive of learning to say things in a new language. The attractive novelty of a "new" language is gone for the second-year student, and as a rule he is not far enough advanced to appreciate the texts given him. Later in the second year, he becomes more familiar with the language and more interested in his work, that is, if he is able to survive.

It is this period, when the student is recovering his language and his interest in it, that is a bore to the average student and a worry to his teacher. What can be done to better the situation? The purpose of this paper is to attempt to answer this question.

If we admit that the vacation has caused the student to forget some of his vocabulary, then the first book of the second year should, if possible, review the vocabulary of the latter part of the first year. If we accept the further theory that part of the trouble is due to the lack of interest caused by the passing of the "newness" of the foreign language, we must attempt to supply another source of interest for the student. It seems to the present writer that the only remaining source for things new is *ideas*. The student must be entertained with ideas that he can grasp but that are on the whole new to him. Facts about Spain, particularly, are new to the average American student. But this brings us back to the book or books used in the last part of the first year. In the first year, the student should learn the simple facts of Spanish, or Spanish-American, geography, and be able to discuss them somewhat in Spanish. He may be able to understand a little about the civilization, customs, etc., of Spain or Spanish America. At least, he should be introduced to that interesting country, Spain. It is a mistake to try to introduce the first-year student to the Spanish-speaking world. There is not time enough. We must concentrate on some one country. Spain is typical in many ways of the other Spanish-speaking countries, and being the mother country would appear to be the logical choice.

If the teacher has skillfully introduced Spain the first year, he will find ready to his hand at the beginning of the second year a source of interest that is *new* for his students. A more detailed study of Spanish geography for a couple of weeks, with maps, the more easily understood customs of the different provinces, illustrated, would make the work intensely interesting, and would cause the students to talk and give them confidence in the use of the language. One week on the government of Spain, pointing out the political divisions of the country, how they relate to the geography of the nation, Catalonia's aversion to Castilian government, the origin of the aversion, Catalonia's part in the world war as indicative of her spirit, etc., would be a natural development of the study of Spain's geography. The next step might be a more intensive study of some attractive province, say Andalucía. Note its geographical position, the temperament of its people, the relationship of these two facts. Study briefly historical cities, men of letters, what they wrote (if possible read easy selections from their works), The peculiar dances, songs, and customs of the province in general.

The work on Andalucía, for instance, might be organized as follows (these are merely suggestions, the variations are infinite):

1. With physical and political maps before the class, show that Andalucía is cut off by mountains or water from the rest of Spain, as well as the rest of the world. Transportation consequently was very difficult in former times, hence the development of local customs (cf., the influence of the Moors in this last re-conquered province of Spain. Granada recaptured in 1492). Note the warm climate, hence tropical fruits. What are they? Have the students look up the names and report later. There is little rain. Point out the rivers. What is their source? Note the use of irrigation in the province. Did the Moors build any irrigation systems?

2. The people, their dress, appearance, manner of speech (cf., Spanish America); lighthearted disposition (as contrasted to the northern Spaniard), quickness of thought, although rather indolent; dances, songs (illustrated if possible); literature.

3. The cities. Sevilla, brief political history; great writers, schools of literature; scene of certain Spanish classics; monuments, Spanish and Arabic, their history, etc. Use similar treatment for Córdoba and Granada, featuring Arabic influence and monuments. Note Irving's relation to the awakened interest in Granada.

4. Assign at the end of each hour written work to be done and

brought in at the next recitation. Have the students recite orally the previous hour's work, etc.

The resourceful teacher will be able to use this material in a way that will develop the student's interest. At the same time the teacher can pave the way for a better appreciation of the book to be read in class by giving particular attention to the place or places where the scenes of the book are laid. Further, this preliminary work will be useful to the student throughout the course, and will give a much needed background.

It would seem that such an approach through easily comprehended subjects would lead naturally to what must always remain the most important goal of the student of Spanish; namely, what the Spanish people think, and if possible why they think it. The student should know this, whether he intends to devote himself to the study of their literature or to sell them automobiles and sewing machines. Technical commercial phraseology is easy to acquire once the student learns a modicum of Spanish and knows something of the Spaniard's mental habits.

The experience of the present writer has been that every time he has used a play or novel at the beginning of the second year, the student had too great difficulty in understanding the Spanish. The setting was usually meaningless to him because he had had no background for it, so he blundered along, and got through, if he did, by main strength and awkwardness. The average student may finish the course, but he would get more out of it if he had a more sensible approach to the subject. The present writer is aware that this outline presents nothing new, but he repeats it here in the hope that some may be helped in solving what appears to him to be one of the most trying problems in the teaching of Spanish.¹

W. S. HENDRIX

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

¹A good bibliography for the development of the plan here outlined is to be found in Professor Thomas E. Oliver's excellent *Suggestions and References for Modern Language Teachers*, published as Bulletin No. 18, 1917, of the University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill. Price 25 cents. It is to be regretted that a book on Spanish games has not been published. One devoted to games on Spanish geography, customs, etc., would be interesting and would be of aid to the teacher. Also games of Spanish authors, or cities, etc., and a Spanish table game, would be welcome.